

**SECRET**

THE WHITE HOUSE  
WASHINGTON



March 2, 1959

MEMORANDUM FOR: The Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Clearances for Access to Special Intelligence Data

To avoid compromise of special intelligence information and of the highly sensitive sources from which it is obtained, it seems to me imperative that every reasonable precaution be taken to insure that the "Special need-to-know" requirement is met before anyone is processed and cleared for access to special intelligence. There is some reason to doubt that in all instances the departments and agencies concerned have rigorously applied this criterion prior to requesting that their personnel be cleared for such access.

It is accordingly suggested, pursuant to applicable NSCIDs, that you consider initiating appropriate action, in consultation with the U.S. Intelligence Board, with a view to developing the facts and charting a course of action with respect to this situation. A first step might be an effort to ascertain the number of individuals who have been cleared. Then there might be indicated an examination of criteria and procedures with respect to those who may be cleared in the future. In this way it is conceivable that attrition might sharply reduce the numbers thereby avoiding any requirement for cancellation of existing clearances.

I would be glad to discuss this with you at your convenience.

*Handwritten signature: Gordon Brown*  
**EXECUTIVE REGISTRY FILE** *White House*

Special Assistant to the President

*Handwritten notes:*  
Planned to be circulated  
to USIB as  
USIB - C-13.1/2

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Reply from DCI  
to USIB as  
USIB - C-13.1/2

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14 MAR 1959

**MEMORANDUM FOR : Mr. Gordon Gray**  
**Special Assistant to the President**  
**for National Security Affairs**

**SUBJECT : Clearance for Access to COMINT**

1. I have your memorandum of March 2, subject as above, indicating your interest in a problem which has been in recent months a subject of serious Board consideration because of the plethora of press stories apparently based on information obtainable only from classified intelligence sources.

2. To respond generally to your memorandum, I wish to assure you that each request for indoctrination for access to COMINT is individually and carefully evaluated and there is a continuing review of the security status and need-to-know of those who have been cleared. The members of the Intelligence Board are responsible for the determination of the security status and of the need-to-know of persons in their respective departments and agencies in accordance with definite and stringent criteria approved by the Board.

3. With regard to your suggestion that the number of individuals who have been cleared and indoctrinated be ascertained, you will be interested to know that such figures are carefully maintained on a current basis by each Board member, and are reported semi-annually to the central register of the Board Secretariat which also maintains a list of those persons outside member departments and agencies who are indoctrinated for COMINT.

4. I have acquainted the Intelligence Board with your interest in this matter. Let me again assure you that it is a concern which is shared by the Board.

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5. I would be pleased to discuss this farther with you at your convenience.

SIGNED

ALLEN W. DULLES  
Director

Typed in USIB/S - 11 Mar 59

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